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Introduction to Asian Culture(s) and Globalization


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I-Chun Wang and Li Guo,
"Introduction to Asian Culture(s) and Globalization"
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Contents of **CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture 15.2 (2013)**
Thematic Issue **Asian Culture(s) and Globalization**
Ed. I-Chun Wang and Li Guo
<<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol15/iss2/>>

Introduction to *Asian Culture(s) and Globalization*

I-Chun Wang and Li GUO

Marshall McLuhan coined the term "the global village" associating globalized human experiences in an electronic age (4). Although transnational relations existed for many centuries, McLuhan predicted in the 1960s that new technologies not only facilitate the growth of international interconnectedness, cross-border exchanges, as well as trans-cultural phenomena, but also help foster cultural transactions. Referring to the dramatic and unprecedented break between the past and the present, tradition and modernity, Arjun Appadurai argues that media and migration have been two major forces impelling the circulation of world cultures (3). In the phenomenon of globalization, people from every part of the world tend to embrace the concepts of democracy, human rights, and technical assistance, but globalization did not and does not go smooth in all aspects of life. Globalization was originally characterized as a power to diminish the gap between the developed and developing worlds. However, there continue to be resistance against globalization because of the West's — i.e., technologically and industrially advanced countries with now "soft" imperial agendas. As Fredric Jameson suggests, globalization has become a philosophical issue because through cultural adaption, integration, and transformation, globalization has triggered the development of mass culture and restructured the production of cultures in various ways (54-60).

The transformation of Asian cultures in the context of globalization has drawn much attention especially after China began opening its door to the world and south eastern countries joined China. For most Asians, globalization suggests US-Americanization and cultural colonization. Global markets witness the success of consumer products such as Coca-Cola, Hollywood films, and fast food restaurants, but more and more products are standardized, for example, computers, cell phones, cars, and even agricultural products. Concurrently, the spread of English as today's *lingua franca* suggests the loss of native tongues, the change of language habits, and new practices in education. Although some positive Western values are accepted by Asians in this process, globalization is considered as new imperialism reinforced by capitalism which results in economical and political inequalities with increasing social problems (see, e.g., McLaren and Faramandpur; Vaish). Appadurai reminds us that globalization marks a new crisis for the sovereignty of nation-states and ethnic identity (4). Besides the adaptation of Western cultures, more and more Asian cultural elements are found in the Western world. Some Western composers and directors tend to infuse Asian elements in their musical compositions and dramatic and film productions. Internationalized Asian cultures include the Korean wave — the Hanryu phenomenon — exemplified in dramas and popular songs, Japanese popular culture such as manga and animation, as well as the fashion of learning Mandarin at Western schools and universities. The globalization of cultures suggests multilayered experiences and emerging aesthetic and cultural consciousness.

We frame *Asian Culture(s) and Globalization* within comparative cultural studies as formulated by Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek and that is the intellectual trajectory of *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture*:

The second principle of comparative cultural studies is the theoretical as well as methodological postulate to move and to dialogue between cultures, languages, literatures, and disciplines. This is a crucial aspect of the framework, the approach as a whole, and its methodology. In other words, attention to other cultures — that is, the comparative perspective — is a basic and founding element and factor of the framework. The claim of emotional and intellectual primacy and subsequent institutional power of national cultures is untenable in this perspective. In turn, the built-in notions of exclusion and self-referentiality of single culture study and their result of rigidly defined disciplinary boundaries are notions against which comparative cultural studies offers an alternative as well as a parallel field of study. This inclusion extends to all Other, all marginal, minority, border, and peripheral and it encompasses both form and substance. However, attention must be paid of the "how" of any inclusionary approach, attestation, methodology, and ideology so as not to repeat the mistakes of Eurocentrism and "universalization" from a "superior" Eurocentric point of view. Dialogue is the only solution. ("From Comparative" <<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol1/iss3/2>>)

In order to redefine Asian cultures in the context of globalization, the purpose of this thematic issue of *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* is to examine the most current phenomena of globalization in Asian cultures. Articles in the issue include theoretical approaches in cultural studies, cultural anthropology, sociology, literary study, musicology, etc., with regard to education, labor

history, feminism, cultural production, literary adaptation, diaspora, urban environment, multi- and interculturalism, the visual arts, cinema, music, theater, translation, the novel, etc., all within the context of globalization and Asia not only as of today, but also with regard to its modernist antecedents: this latter perspective is particularly relevant precisely because of globalization: more often than not the pre-history of globalization remains unexplored. Contributors to the issue are scholars working in Japan, Korea, the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, and the United States. It is of import that the majority of the contributors are scholars working in Asia or are originally from countries in Asia who make use of their own cultures' scholarship, a matter of relevance with regard to the impact of Western scholarship where in publications the overwhelming framework of references remains — as a rule — Western.

Articles in *Asian Culture(s) and Globalization* are as follows:

In "Sinologism, the Western World View, and the Chinese Perspective"

<<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol15/iss2/2>> Ming Dong Gu discusses how the West formulated its ways of observing China and how the rest of the world and the Chinese themselves view Chinese culture through the Western lens. Gu discusses the thought of selected scholars in Western history who have contributed to the formation of Sinologism and explores the motivation, logic, rationale, epistemology, methodology, and characteristics of the West's long-term endeavor to incorporate China into the Western-centered world system.

In "Shimoda's Program for Japanese and Chinese Women's Education"

<<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol15/iss2/3>> Mamiko Suzuki discusses Western developments as a facet of educational curricula in Japan in the early twentieth century. When in the early 1900s a number of elite Chinese women traveled to Tokyo — for most, their first time abroad — to receive a modern education, it was at Jissen Women's Academy, which was the first to enroll female Chinese students in Tokyo and thus a crucial site for the development of a modern pan-Asian female identity. A central figure in the popularization of women's education and household and hygiene management was Utako Shimoda (1854-1936), a leading figure of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Suzuki analyzes how Shimoda portrayed the role of the modern homemaker to elite Japanese and Chinese women and how her inclusion of Chinese women engaged with a discourse of empire and feminism. The new body of knowledge and curricular experience Shimoda provided for her students was then directed by them toward modern homemaking in Japan and revolutionary activities in China.

In "Re-defining South Korean Scholarship and Education within the Context of Globalization"

<<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol15/iss2/4>> Simon C. Estok discusses effects of globalization on the educational and scholarly goals and realities of Korea. Estok argues that although the transformational impacts of globalization in terms of sports, entertainment, politics, and business in Korea are visible, efforts to produce more globally visible Korean scholarship have been ineffective and counter-productive. Estok shows that the imagined dangers to Korean nationhood are rooted in fears of invasion which have strong historical and contemporary justification. Colonized for a third of the twentieth century, Korea in the twenty-first century is a recipient, not a contributor, of global scholarly capital. True transformations of Korean education and scholarship, Estok argues, will only happen once Korea addresses the key issues: that solutions are often superficial, that there are fundamental differences between educational philosophies of Korea and the West, that policy makers are out-of-touch with the schools and universities, and that racism and xenophobia within Korea are hindrances.

In "Singapore, State Nationalism, and the Production of Diaspora"

<<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol15/iss2/5>> Cheryl Narumi Naruse examines *The Straits Times* series "Singaporean Abroad" and analyzes how conceptions of national time, space, and community are restructured by state concerns of economic survival within the era of globalization. In "Singaporean Abroad," readers find a curious amalgamation of feature writing, travel writing, and advertising about cosmopolitan, transnationally connected citizens of Singapore. Naruse shows how positive representations of overseas Singaporeans as "national heroes" reflected in the content of the series evidences efforts by the Government of Singapore to refashion cultural values and to advance beyond national space. Further, Naruse examines how the narrative structure of the series accommodates neoliberal values of knowledge economy and biopolitical aesthetics within a nationalist framework.

In "Intermarried Couples and 'Multiculturalism' in Japan"

<<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol15/iss2/6>> Kaori Mori Want discusses why hyphenated names for the children of intermarried children are important for the achievement of multiculturalism in Japan in an era of globalization. In Japan the number of people who marry interracially or inter-ethnically is increasing, but changes to naming practices must occur for Japan to become a multicultural society. Intermarriage is not a reliable indicator of the maturity of multiculturalism. Foreign residents who have intermarried in Japan do not have the rights of Japanese, such as those of voting, social welfare, education, and so on. This fact alone makes Japan far from multicultural. One of the aspects missing in the critiques of multiculturalism in Japan has to do with naming practices. Children of intermarried couples have at least two cultural heritages but under the present Japanese family law, it is almost impossible to give children a hyphenated last name that would reflect their multicultural heritage.

In "US-American Protestant Missionaries and Translation in China 1894-1911"

<<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol15/iss2/7>> Mingyu Lu discusses impact of and surrounding atmosphere between Protestant missionaries and Chinese intellectuals in translating Western texts. During the national crisis in 1894-1911, Protestant missionaries and Chinese intellectuals co-translated a large number of Western texts and adjusted their translations with regard to content and objectives. While the missionaries and their Chinese co-translators held different views towards the mapping of learning specifically towards Western learning, Chinese learning, and Christian messages, the translations were of significant impact in the period discussed. Lu argues that under the appeal of national renewal, both Chinese and Protestant missionaries joined in constructing new learning and a new culture during which they went through a change of mentality to learning and culture. Lu's argumentation is a revision of the usual colonial perspective and she proposes that in the case of said translation of foreign texts the situation is more complicated than it could be assumed.

In "Transnational Socialist Imaginary and the Proletarian Woman in China"

<<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol15/iss2/8>> Anup Grewal discusses 1930s Shanghai and representations of the proletarian woman in relation to the intellectual New Woman and the fashionable Modern Girl. Grewal considers the concept of the proletarian woman in socialist culture first within the context of a local and global field of contending modernist visions of femininity, class, and the city. Next, Grewal analyses how the figure of the Chinese proletarian woman activates a socialist transnationality through shared formal and narrative innovations of translational leftist literature and cinema. Through her analysis, Grewal suggests how the 1930s Chinese transnational socialist imaginary presents a moment of global modernity based on simultaneity and affinity through political solidarity.

In "Reinterpreting History and *Gujin*'s (古今) Cultural Practices"

<<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol15/iss2/9>> Chao Liu analyzes the moral norms established by *Gujin* 古今 (*Past and Present*), a literary journal that emerged in occupied Shanghai in the 1940s, through the lens of historical narratives and the strategies *Gujin* intellectuals employed to subvert fundamentalist nationalism. Liu argues that *Gujin* created a cultural space between resistance and collaboration which challenged nationalistic imperatives and justified the subsistence of Chinese people under the Japanese occupation by presenting its own principles of social morals and erecting a pantheon of historical figures. Further, Liu posits that the journal manifested a non-cooperative attitude and a form of cultural resistance to Japan's wartime propaganda.

In "Wait upon Ishiguro, Englishness, and Class"

<<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol15/iss2/10>> Mustapha Marrouchi analyzes Kazuo Ishiguro's novels with focus on the writer's interest in Japanese culture and his preoccupation with matters of class in England. Marrouchi analyzes Ishiguro's novels as located astride of East, West, and the in-between: his precise, exquisitely made stories are shadowed by absences and silences, balanced "between elegy and irony" (Rushdie) and this is so whether the speaker is the obsessive butler in *The Remains of the Day* or one of the demented heroes in *The Unconsoled* or *When We Were Orphans* or the Japanese, guilty or exiled, in Ishiguro's first two novels *A Pale View of Hills* and *An Artist of the Floating World*.

In "The Narration of Transnational Territory in Kingston's *China Men* and Kim's 검은 꽃 (Black Flower)" <<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol15/iss2/11>> Ju Young Jin analyzes Maxine Hong

Kingston's and Young-Ha Kim's novels both of which feature East Asian indentured workers in the U.S. and Mexico, respectively. Jin traces the way in which the transnational subjects in the two novels create a textual territory by displacing national histories in a period that has witnessed an increase in indentured workers from East Asia to American continents. Kim creates an apocryphal history of the Korean presence in the New World reimagining the forgotten past by interweaving actual historical facts and Kingston narrates the story of Chinese indentured workers who inaugurate a new cultural tradition in their exiled land to make it their home. Both writers narrate displacement, which Jin reads as "deterritorialization" (Deleuze and Guattari) in order to ground their protagonists in a new space unbound by national territories. For Kingston and Kim creating textual territory is tantamount to legitimation of their own views of literature and the history of immigration in the U.S.

In "Ironic Appropriation of Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls* in Bulosan's *The Cry and the Dedication*" <<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol15/iss2/12>> Robert Brown claims that Bulosan's appropriation of *For Whom* borders on plagiarism and that this in part defines *The Cry* as a postcolonial text. Brown maintains that E. San Juan Jr.'s otherwise comprehensive introduction to *The Cry* ignores Hemingway's text in favor of a Filipino author, Luis Taruc, with an implicit argument that Bulosan used Taruc to make his novel a more emphatic example of Filipino determinacy. San Juan negates his potential to describe Filipino determinacy in his negation of Hemingway and in so doing, San Juan echoes Bulosan's earlier dismissal of source materials in ironic ways, revealing a trans-historical habit of publicly diminishing an identity in the process of trying to reveal it in a positive light. Brown uses Homi Bhabha's "Of Mimicry and Man" to examine identity, postcolonialism, and geopolitics and details the ways in which all of Bulosan's appropriations — and mimics — adds to *The Cry*'s critical value.

In "The Myth of Nothing in Classics and Asian Indigenous Films" <<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol15/iss2/13>> Sheng-mei Ma discusses how the desert and the permafrost region are *terra incognita*, except nomads and Indigenous peoples. Given the extreme conditions of these forbidding places, Western modernity sees its own shadow cast on such black holes on earth. Since the 1960s, classic Hollywood or art house films by David Lean, Akira Kurosawa, Hiroshi Teshigahara, Anthony Minghella, and Sergei Bodrov romanticize and/or mythologize what is perceived as modernity's mirror image. Indie films in recent decades, particularly by Asian Indigenous filmmakers Byambasuren Davaa, Zacharias Kunuk, and Khyentse Norbu trained in or collaborated with the West, seek to tell their own stories. Despite different perspectives and modes of representation, both mainstream and alternative film-making agree on the task of myth-making, self-forging out of nothing, and the barrenness and voidness of the land.

In "Eng and the Entertainment Film in the People's Republic of China" <<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol15/iss2/14>> Munib Rezaie discusses the rise of film as entertainment in the People's Republic of China with a focus on the accomplishments director Dayyan Eng, known in China as Shixian Wu. Rezaie briefly reviews the changing definitions and views towards film as entertainment in the PRC as well as some relevant changes in regulation and policy within the industry itself that largely stem from the ongoing process of globalization and China's accession to the World Trade Organization. Within this new cinematic landscape, Rezaie argues that Eng should be seen as a major creative force in contemporary Chinese cinema. Eng's unique biography as a "cross-cultural kid" enables him to mobilize multicultural sensibilities in unique and often unprecedented ways. Acknowledging the limits of a transnational approach to such a filmmaker, Rezaie calls for the development of multinational filmmaking in order to address the changing realities that globalization continues to bring.

In "Hollywood and Shanghai Cinema in the 1930s" <<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol15/iss2/15>> Adrian Song Xiang argues that Hollywood films provided a repertoire of images of modernity Chinese filmmakers of the 1930s adapted to their films. Xiang analyses Yu Sun's 1932 film *野玫瑰* (Wild Rose), whose leading female character Xiaofeng was adapted from Hollywood actress Mary Pickford's iconic rambunctious teenager screen persona, particularly from the 1922 film *Tess of the Storm Country*. Owing to various factors including the difference between the conditions of production of the two films, the modernist potential of the film's teenage girl image was better realized in the Chinese film than in the US-American original and

Xiang's analysis suggests an adjustment in the history of early Chinese cinema to account for Hollywood's impact.

In "Shen and Cinema in 1930s Shanghai" <<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol15/iss2/16>> Ling Zhang analyzes Xiling Shen's film *十字街頭* (1937) (Crossroads) in relation to the influence from foreign film practice and concepts from Hollywood and Soviet cinema in 1930s Shanghai. By an analysis of the film's cinematic style, Zhang explores the transcultural and transmedial possibilities and potentials in the context of film and film culture in the 1930s and the unruly energy and unique aesthetic characteristics embedded in the process of creative mimesis and transplantation. While in the 1930s Chinese cinema had an ambivalent and paradoxical attitude to US-American and Soviet films, Shen developed his own narrative and formal style in the process of a trans-cultural practice of visual reinterpretation.

In "Virtuality, Nationalism, and Globalization in Zhang's *Hero*" <<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol15/iss2/17>> Ping Zhu examines how Yimou Zhang's martial arts film dislodges the historical tale from its spatiotemporal context by creating virtual images, characters, narratives, and ideologies, and presents the virtual idea of *tianxia* (天下) (all under heaven) as an active mode of participation in the virtual global. Amidst the surge of virtuality in its cinematic space, with *Hero* Zhang aims to eclipse the national by a higher order: a homogenizing and harmonizing order that originates in traditional Chinese culture and that is compatible with the post-9/11 world order. However, Zhu argues that in the film the homogenizing global force is ruptured by local culture, history, and politics and creates more disjuncture and difference at the level of the local.

In "Cultural Hybridization in a 1930s Taiwanese Popular Song" <<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol15/iss2/18>> Mei-Wen Lee and Timothy P. Urban present a comparison of the three different sets of lyrics used for the melody of the 1930s Taiwanese popular song, "Moonlight Sorrow": Taiwanese lyrics used by Yu-Xian Deng and Tian-Wang Chou in their 1933 arrangement, Japanese lyrics by Kurihara Hakuya from the late 1930s, and Mandarin lyrics added by Nu Chuan in the 1960s. Lee and Urban examine three orchestral settings of the "Moonlight Sorrow" melody. In the first orchestral version Japanese composer Hayakawa Masaaki uses the melody in a manner similar to that of *The Four Seasons* by Antonio Vivaldi. In the second arrangement Russian composer Yuri Yakushev combines a *domra* (a traditional Russian plucked string instrument) with instruments from both a classical orchestra and a jazz band in an easy-listening, Beguine-style. The last arrangement examined is by Taiwanese composer Szu-Hsien Lee who combines Western Baroque orchestration (with the addition of a clarinet) with Western triadic harmonies and harmony derived both from the pentatonic melody itself, as well as from the open string tuning of traditional Chinese instruments.

In "Crossed Boundaries in Musical Culture between Asia and the West" <<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol15/iss2/19>> Kheng K. Koay and Mikel LeDee examine Tony Prabowo's *Pasar Loak* (Flea Market) for soprano and percussions and Chinary Ung's *Grand Alap* (A Window in the Sky). Composers Prabowo and Ung adopt modernist techniques from Western and traditional Asian music cultures in their compositions. Koay and LeDee explore aspects which broaden the presentation of sound in the two selected compositions and the background influences of Western and Asian music on the two composers. Prabowo and Ung absorb new experiences and embrace music that excites them and Prabowo, especially, uses different musical techniques which range from the early to late twentieth century. Ung, on the other hand, incorporates musical idioms from different cultures such as India and Japan in his compositions. The two compositions not only challenge their audiences with new listening experiences, but also illustrate hybrid music between Asia and the West.

In "Masereel, Lu, and the Development of the Woodcut Picture Book (連環畫) in China" <<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol15/iss2/20>> Tie Xiao situates Chinese "continuous pictorial narratives" (*lianxu tuhua*) by radical woodcut artists in the 1930s within a global exchange of the visual. Further, Xiao examines woodcut artists' efforts to develop an expressive form of mass-oriented art through creative engagement with the Japanese creative print (*hanga*) movement and the "woodcut novels" by the Belgian graphic artist Frans Masereel. Xiao argues that central to self-produced woodcut pictorial narratives is the dilemma between the intimate and private impulse of self-expression and the desired immediacy and accessibility of form.

In "Rethinking Theatrical Images of the New Woman in China's Republican Era" <<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol15/iss2/21>> Li Guo analyses the multivalent representations of the New Woman and posits that they encompass a broad array of blended feminine identities following the introduction of Western literary and cultural trends into Chinese culture. The tensions between ideological discourses about nation, gender, and politics as revealed in the plays of the republican period reveal the many underlying cultural paradigms and the processes in which dramatists Sinicized foreign models of the New Woman to appeal to their domestic audiences. Guo explores how the playwrights' gendered viewpoints contribute to divergent representation of the New Woman as a feminine subject and reconfigure Western theatrical traditions to express new ideals of women's sexual, social, and political identities.

In "Globalization and Theater Spectacles in Asia" <<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol15/iss2/22>> I-Chun Wang discusses how performance is an integral part of cultural discourse: in industrially advanced Asian nations governments started to examine the relationship between cultural discourse and popular culture, cultural identity and tourist attractions and artists have become prominent participants in this development in particular with regard to theater performance, an activity with old traditions in Asian cultures. With the uptake of technology and in some cases Western innovation, Asian theater performance not only became an important part of social and cultural discourse, it rejuvenated itself. Wang posits that Asian theater performance shaped cultural trends, reinterpreted theatrical arts, and provided a platform for innovation and communication with audiences from different cultural backgrounds and thus became a factor of globalization within Asia and between the West and Asia including the tourist industry, a worldwide phenomenon.

Asian Culture(s) and Globalization includes a thematic "Bibliography for the Study of Asian Culture(s) and Globalization" <<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol15/iss2/23>> compiled by Chien-hang Liu, Li Guo, I-Chun Wang. The Bibliography contains studies in terminology and theoretical approaches, society, education, literature, language, art, music, urban studies, ecocriticism and environment, cinema, religion, gender, food culture, popular culture, media, etc., published in several languages.

We note that following the journal's style guide with regard to Asian languages including Chinese and Japanese names — which in many instances are referred to in the native sequence of surname first name — we follow the Western usage of first name surname: this is because while more often than not in English-language publications the said native sequence is followed, this is not done with regard to other languages such as Turkish or Hungarian and hence we follow the Western usage in all instances and this remains the case both in the journal and its affiliate, the Purdue monograph series of Books in Comparative Cultural Studies <<http://www.thepress.purdue.edu/series/comparative-cultural-studies>> & <<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweblibrary/seriespurdueccs>>.

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